



A Gift from the Lord  
Peony O. S. Cheung

Page 08



Theology Day  
Celebration 2021

Page 10



News from Asia Academy  
of Practical Theology (HK)

Page 15



The 25th  
Chuen King Lecture

Page 17



2022 Walkathon

Page 18

## The Psalmist's Lament and Contemporary Chinese Hymnody

Naomi Thurston  
Assistant Professor

### *The Lament and Christian Hymnody*

It is remarkable that the collection which Christian hymn writers for many centuries have used as an inspiration and blueprint for composing songs of celebration and thanksgiving should consist to a large extent of another kind of "song," prayers of supplication or complaint, which possess a much more negative note and at times a tone of violent desperation. These poems are sometimes paired with or contain elements of the "curse psalms," or "imprecatory psalms" — indeed the two types generally conflate and are often treated as one. The fusion of curse and lament occurs for example in Psalm 69, a psalm frequently quoted in the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> which lists a string of curses against the suppliant's enemies. These laments are better described as petitions or prayers rather than hymns or songs of praise.

Although the individual laments also contain an existential recognition of human helplessness and dependence on an all-powerful God, as well as memorably rendered confessions of trust and faith, could not the Jewish and Christian traditions survive well enough without their overbearing emphasis on the negative? Yet there is something in these supplications that seems to address a crucial moment even in our own "age of anxiety": that moment in which existential questions are asked — or prayed — along the lines of "Why" and "How long? ("Why this misery?"; "How long can this godforsakenness be endured?") followed by an insistence on and hope of being answered.

1. Cf. Murphy, Roland E. *The Gift of the Psalms*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2000. Print. 109.

The American biblical scholar and theologian Walter Brueggemann (1933–) noted some years ago that it was “a curious fact that the [Christian] church has, by and large, continued to sing songs of orientation in a world increasingly experienced as disoriented.”<sup>2</sup> It is interesting, too, that Brueggemann, along with many of his contemporaries should think of ours as a world marked “increasingly” by an experience of disorientation or anxiety. Perhaps it is true that our modern age has devised more sophisticated descriptions, starker metaphors to diagnose our basic sense confusion and helplessness. However, disorientation in itself — fear and confusion in the face of a world or situation perceived as chaotic, unwelcoming, or threatening — found religious expression in the Hebrew lament psalms in a compilation of songs written thousands of years ago.<sup>3</sup> The condition is not only chronic in this age, but ailed the ancients; their artistic renderings of the human malady and the divine cures invoked are woven through religious poetry and song for millennia.

The individual lament form of the Hebrew Psalms has been reshaped again and again; we can find its traces in Christian songs written through the ages by composers familiar with its form, even in contemporary Chinese hymnody there are notes which strike an odd Christianized balance between supplication and resolution that expresses itself in praise and thanksgiving. “Hymns” (from the Latin “songs of praise” or the Greek “odes to gods or heroes”) is used rather liberally to designate songs of Christian worship, praise, or devotion found throughout the Protestant tradition of hymnody.

Despite Robert Alter’s warning that “[w]e are likely to perceive the poetic richness of Psalms

more finely if we realize that there is a good deal of... refashioning of genre in the collection,”<sup>4</sup> a generic categorization is still helpful. The Psalter is sometimes divided into the following genres (*Gattungen*)<sup>5</sup>: laments or prayers; hymns or songs of praise; songs of thanksgiving; royal psalms; songs of Zion; liturgies; wisdom and Torah psalms.

“It may come as no surprise that in the current lectionaries the lament is not as popular a choice as hymns of praise”<sup>6</sup> remarks the Catholic priest and biblical scholar Roland Murphy. And yet, as Claus Westermann notes, “the individual lament psalm is by far the most frequently occurring genre in the Psalter. About 50 [of the 150] psalms belong to it.”<sup>7</sup> What accounts for the popularity of the genre over songs of praise or thanksgiving can only be speculated upon. It is worth noting in contrast that browsing contemporary Christian hymnals will reveal a nearly reversed trend: songs that focus on God’s majesty and splendor, or on our gratitude and joy, striking a chord of victory over shame and confusion outnumber songs of woe and suffering. The “dirges” in Christian hymnals might be reserved for Good Friday, and even at Christian funerals, laments are not necessarily the songs of choice. Singing of “trials and tribulations” is generally done from the perspective of Christian — or Christ’s — perseverance in light of salvation already known, rather than from a position of pleading or hope deferred, even if such emphasis might promise more comfort to the struggling believer than a victory hymn at a time of crisis, grief, or despair.

Psalms that question Yahweh’s goodness toward or concern for the speaker by asking “how long?” (Psalms 6, 13) or “why?” (Psalm 22) — or, as is the case with Psalm 3, by exclaiming “how many!” — are starkly underrepresented

2. Walter Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002. Print. 25.

3. Cf. Robert Alter, “Psalms.” *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Ed. Robert Alter. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Pr. of Harvard Univ. Pr, 244–45.

4. Robert Alter, “Psalms.” *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Ed. Robert Alter. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Pr. of Harvard Univ. Pr, 1994. 247.

5. James Limburg, “Book of Psalms.” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Ed. David Noel. Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992. Print. 522–36.

6. Ronald Murphy, *The Gift of the Psalms*. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2000. Print. 61.

7. Westermann. 47. (The German original: “Der Klagepsalm des Einzelnen ist die im Psalter bei weitem am häufigsten begegnende Psalmengattung. Es gehören etwa 50 Psalmen ihr an.”) Confer also Alter. 247–48.

in traditional Christian hymnody. Why has, for example, the Christian worshipper so selectively inherited from this collection textual inspiration for sung devotion to the God whom ancient Israel addresses with praise, thanksgiving, and professions of trust as well as with laments and prayers of supplication?

While the Greek term *psalmos* used in the Septuagint conveys chiefly that the Psalter is a collection of songs (more specifically, songs played on stringed instruments — *Saitenlieder* — echoing and specifying the Hebrew *mizmôr*<sup>8</sup>), it does little to suggest the variety of poetry contained therein, ranging from praise to desperate curses and lament. The basic form of the individual lament Psalm can be summed up as a five-point formula found in many of the laments:

1. address (simply “O God” in 44:1; 80:1–2)
2. complaint
3. request for help addressed to God
4. affirmation of trust in God
5. a vow to praise God when the crisis is past.

A typical example of such a psalm in the Psalter is Psalm 13, which begins with the well-known opening line, “How long, Lord?” This song contains the makings of the classic lament: address to God (How long, O Lord); complaint or supplication (why has God forgotten me, God doesn’t care, doesn’t see, doesn’t hear me, I’m left alone); request (look on me, answer me, give light to my eyes); affirmation of trust (but I trust in your unfailing love); vow to praise God (I will sing praise to the Lord).

Some scholars have argued that the petitioner in this lament is sick, thus he issues the plea that light be given to his eyes: he is dying, on the brink of death, and this is his desperate call to

God before “the lights go out” and his enemies triumph over him once and for all. The suppliant’s “eyes are dimmed by failing strength..., by grief ([which is] often associated with the afflicted...), and by longings unsatisfied or hope deferred...”<sup>9</sup>

Janowski argues that light and life are equated to each other in this Psalm, which also happens in Psalms 6 and 38: “Um ‘lebendig’ zu sein, muss der Mensch das Licht des Lebens (vgl. Ps 56,14) sehen können. Er muss aber auch für die Augen der anderen, besonders aber für die Augen Gottes sichtbar sein.”<sup>10</sup> To be alive, the human suppliant must be able to see and be visible to others, including God. What might be alluded to here further is the universal fear of losing one’s eyesight associated with losing one’s point of orientation in life, as in the Sophoclean tragedy, where physical blindness poignantly illustrates fateful ignorance or misunderstanding and “blind” encapsulates the tragic drive toward self-destruction.

The loss of eyesight or God shining his light on the suppliant is a common motif throughout the Book of Psalms, while darkness and blindness represent death, disorientation, and the chaotic. According to Janowski, the “fall” in verse 5 of Psalm 13 marks a “manifestation of the chaotic in the life of the suppliant” — chaos in human life and its literary rendering are not exclusively modern phenomena. The implication in this lament is clear and simple: if God turns to see and listen, all will be well.<sup>11</sup> Here we also see the motif of God’s nearness or his being far away. The suppliant, who in his moment of despair senses the loss of God’s presence, in issuing his plea or cry for help affirms his or her confidence that God is near, even in great suffering and that God’s presence will be felt again.

8. Jan C. Gertz, *Grundinformation Altes Testament*. 415.

9. Comments on Psalm 6:7. *Zondervan NIV Study Bible: New International Version*. 793.

10. Janowski, Bernd. “Das verborgene Angesicht Gottes: Psalm 13 als Muster eines Klageliedes des einzelnen.” *Klage. Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie*, Band 16. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verl, 2001. 35.

11. *Ibid.*

There are traces of the Hebraic individual lament in Christian liturgy, such as in the hymns of the Wesley brothers or John Newton. One example, reminiscent of Psalm 13, is Charles Wesley's "Father, I Stretch My Hands to Thee" of 1741:

Father, I stretch my hands to Thee, No other help I know; If Thou withdraw Thyself from me, Ah! whither shall I go?

What did Thine only Son endure, Before I drew my breath! What pain, what labor, to secure My soul from endless death!

Surely Thou canst not let me die; O speak, and I shall live; And here I will unwearied lie, Till Thou Thy Spirit give.

Author of faith! to Thee I lift My weary, longing eyes: O let me now receive that gift! My soul without it dies.

The relationship between "faith" and "seeing" is clearly highlighted in the lines of this hymn; they express vividly the sentiment of many of the lament Psalms of hope deferred and waiting for God's salvation: both for God to reveal himself to the suppliant and by making the suppliant visible again.

### **Two Chinese Hymn Writers: T. C. Chao and "Xiaomin"**

#### *T. C. Chao's Notes on Hymn Writing*

T. C. Chao (趙紫宸) (1888–1979) has been described as the "Father of Chinese hymnody."<sup>12</sup> He not only was one of the first, along with the Methodist missionary Bliss Wiant to compile an all-Chinese Protestant Christian hymnal in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but also wrote and translated into Chinese numerous Christian hymns designed to cater to the Chinese soul, both in tune and language.

There are traces of the individual lament in some of Chao's texts. Of interest, too, are his introductory remarks given in the preface of the second hymnal, with original Chinese hymns, in which Chao lays out his understanding of what Chinese Christian hymns should contain (111 ff.). According to Chao, they should reflect:

1. Realism 111
2. Simplicity 111
3. Challenge 112
4. Chinese heritage 113
5. Personal Experience 114
6. Praise to God 114
7. Daily Life 115
8. Social Concern 115
9. Doctrinal Teaching 115

The interesting point about being "realistic" and conveying "personal experience" is that these two requirements for Chinese hymn writing correspond closely to the character of the individual lament and reflect the notion of emphasizing the petitioner's or believer's *Sitz im Leben* when pondering the likely significance of his or her prayer. One of Chao's hymns, "Praise Our Father For This Lord's Day" (138/213) set to a Buddhist chant, although Christian in conception and outlook, still bears definite traces of the Hebraic plea for God's presence so commonly expressed in the individual lament, as for example in the third verse:

Sometimes we bear pain and sorrow/Sometimes darkness hides the morrow; Father, Father, leave us not/When sore trouble falls as our lot.

The fifth verse contains another plea: "Father, hear us while we pray/And receive us now and for aye."

12. Cf. Fang-Lan Hsieh, *Hua Xia Song Yang Hua Wen Zan Mei Zhi yan jiu*. Xiang Gang: Jin xin Hui Chu Ban She, 2011. 《華夏頌揚華文讚美詩之研究》。香港：浸信會出版社，2011。

### “Lü Xiaomin’s “Canaan Hymns””

Themes in the hymns of Lü Xiaomin (呂小敏) (“Xiao Min,” born 1970) are wide-ranging, from songs of thanksgiving and praise (some styled closely on those of the Hebrew Psalter, such as songs resembling Psalm 119 or 139) — even patriotism — to songs affirming trust in God’s goodness (part of the more positive sections of the lament) to songs invoking perseverance in the face of suffering, hardships, and persecution (see Hymn 93) to “ascension-like” hymns, to questioning songs (such as Hymn 19) — and straightforward laments. Some songs, such as 161 “Joseph’s Story,” also retell biblical stories. In length Xiao Min’s songs range from two lines to choruses with several verses.

One of Lü Xiao Min’s hymns mixes different types: “Hymn 146” in her vast collection of songs written over the past few decades is a direct plea to God to have pity on her country, her country’s leaders, and her family, “Hear my Heart’s Cry” (《聽我心聲》) :

聽我心聲但願我的國家敬畏主，聽我心聲但願君王起來敬拜主，聽我心聲但願我的家人服事主，聽我心聲我的年日屬於主，求你聽我祈求憐憫我的國家和民族，廣行赦免大施拯救，主求你憐憫我的國家和民族，因著耶穌的緣故。<sup>13</sup>

This hymn might be compared to Psalms such as 17, 61, or 102, all of which can be classed as individual laments. One of them, Psalm 102, is also referred to as one of the “penitentiary Psalms,”<sup>14</sup> while Psalm 61 has been described by Richard Murphy as a “mild lament.”<sup>15</sup> However, it is interesting that all five of them essentially open with the same plea as Lü’s hymn: “Lord, hear my cry.” These are the first lines from each Psalm:

17: “Hear, O Lord, my righteous plea; listen to my cry.”

61: “Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer.”

102: “Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry for help come to you. Do not hide your face from me when I am in distress. Turn your ear to me; when I call, answer me quickly.”

Another hymn, 297, “求主拯救我們的家” (Please, Lord, save my family) echoes this sentiment. While the reference in this text is to the singer’s family — the talk is of family and relatives living far away (or, perhaps, in an extended sense, spiritually separated from their Christian biological family) — the reference to “家” might also be a plea asking God to save “our country.”

你的家你的家在哪裏？你的親人你的親人在何方？路程遠任務重我們快趕工，時間都是匆匆。我們都來對主說拯救我們的家，我們都來對主說拯救我們的家，在遙遠的都市里在遙遠的鄉下，求主拯救我們的家。

A typical lament hymn is Canaan Hymn 148, “Lord, Have Mercy on Me” (《主求你憐憫我》) :

主我總是讓你傷心，求你今日憐憫我，沒有聽你的教導，這是我的過錯，我仍要向你祈求，用你大能手攙扶我，不再走自己的路，完全讓你帶領我。

“Lord, how I always grieve you. I ask you this day to take pity on me. Not heeding your instruction, I have been to blame. Still I turn to you in prayer. Lend your mighty hand to steady me. I will no longer go my own way. I submit to your guidance completely.”

13. Online resource: <http://www.christianstudy.com/data/hymns/text/c3358.html> 和 <https://www.zanmeishige.com/song/26281.html>. (Archived Date: February 5, 2022).

14. Cf. Ronald Murphy, *The Gift of the Psalms*. Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 2000. Print. 74.

15. Ibid. 104.

Here can be seen the typical outline of the Hebraic individual lament, reinvented in Chinese Christian supplication:

1. address: "Lord";
2. request: "take pity";
3. "complaint": my pitiful state/"not heeding your instruction" ("I have been to blame"; here is the Christian rendering based on a theological understanding of human sinfulness and the need for Christ's redemptive grace);
4. request: "lend your mighty hand"; and, finally, the
5. promise of loyalty and devotion: "I will no longer go my own way. I submit."

### **Truth or Romance**

So in conclusion I ask: is it in fact true, as Brueggemann suggests, that "[m]uch Christian piety and spirituality is romantic and unreal in its positiveness"?<sup>16</sup> Brueggemann reacts to what he regards as the general avoidance in Christian hymnody and liturgy of the "psalms of negativity," claiming that Christians prefer to see themselves as going from "strength to strength" and from "victory to victory," a preference he finds apparent in the ways Christians express themselves to their God in song. Perhaps the individual lament was not meant to be sung, but rather prayed in private or, as some scholars have suggested, in a ritualistic context, in the presence of a mediator who then offers the suppliant God's response, which in turn results in the latter's move from supplication to an individual expression of trust or vow to praise. I would argue that the lament does survive in Christian hymnody, though not in its full Hebrew literary form. Examples of both English and Chinese contemporary hymns offer evidence that the individual supplication as found in the ancient Hebrew Psalter has been creatively adapted and reworked to serve modern-day Christian worshippers in recounting

their own situation, recalling the hopelessness once faced without God and now replaced with a hope in Christ.

Normally, however, when we think of the Psalmist, the Hebrew Psalter or "psalms, hymns, and songs" that Paul the Apostle in his letter to the Ephesians reminds Christian believers to sing as an encouragement to one another in their Christian gatherings,<sup>17</sup> our first association is hardly that of "pitiful." Paul's admonition could also be read in just this light: singing in order to encourage might imply the need of the Christian for solace and comfort in song — not music alone, but such words that capture a moment of existential anguish, terror, desperation, or despondency articulated to melody, words and notes that through their repetition, quality of communal ownership, and power to resonate and lend courage, reminding the listener — or singer — that through conscious and deliberate, physical articulation of her plight she can address herself to another, that in song her cry can be heard. This articulation and addressing oneself to another, who might actually see a situation perceived as hopeless for what it is rather than what it appears to be, is itself an act of faith. This point of appeal (as for instance in Psalm 88) is introduced at the very beginning as an essential element in the songs of lament: "Lord, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you. May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry..."). Paul meanwhile goes on to admonish the church to "give thanks to God the Father."

What are we to make of the numerous individual laments in the Hebrew tradition which offer no immediate cure-all, wholesale resolution, songs of woe which begin on the note of "Where are you, God?" and end not on a note of fulfillment, but "merely" the hope of rescue? What should we make of the Hebrew Psalms that speak of the God who has forsaken us (like Bonhoeffer's God, who leaves us to live in a "world without a

16. Walter Brueggemann, *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002. Print. xi.

17. Confer Ephesians 5:19 ff.

working hypothesis of God”), a God seemingly far off, whose intervention in the end is hoped for but not seen? Is this not an uncomfortable moment for triumphalist Christianity? And yet, is not the raw emotion that the Psalmist expresses in the poem of supplication one that is felt by every human being, and felt by each of us living in Hong Kong today? Though Christian tradition readily acknowledges the state of sinful wretchedness that necessitates divine intervention to free sinners from sin and destruction, that same tradition has less readily incorporated the Hebrew lament in its original form and intent into its songs of worship: instead it has reinterpreted the song of supplication into a “song of triumphant solution”: there is no waiting, no holding out; strictly speaking, there is no need to risk this existence on the abstract hope of being heard in the future. While the “song of solution” need not — does not — reflect life experience in its entirety, the tone of Christian worship songs is often that of wholeness, healing, and cheer. Examples of pure supplication are rare, though not entirely absent.

The Lord’s Prayer is in fact a prayer of supplication. It asks God to act. It expresses a waiting on God, a trust and hope that, if one judged merely by much of the emotion generated in contemporary as well as a great deal of traditional Christian worship, is largely missing from the Christian experience. The prayer of supplication and the lament of the Psalmist give expression not just to the life-negating emotion of temporary despair or lack: more importantly, they express ultimate faith in God to intervene. But the moment they capture is real, authentic life experience, the moment before the suppliant sees her prayers answered, before his tears are wiped away: as Hannah in the Book of Samuel or Stephen before he sees heaven opened up. The “song of solution” knows only the moment of the answered prayer. It does not invite the believer to reflect on Gethsemane, but leaps to the resurrection. The hymns of Lü Xiaomin, a Henanese Christian with no formal musical training who suffered persecution for her Christian witness, encompass both, the pleading

and rejoicing, victory and despair. Lü’s own life taught her the song of supplication, a song for our age and situation in Hong Kong, a song of hope as the lament affirms the justice that it longs for.

### Works Consulted

- Alter, Robert. “Psalms.” *The Literary Guide to the Bible*. Ed. Robert Alter. Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Pr. of Harvard Univ. Pr, 1994. 244–62. Print.
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *Gemeinsames Leben*. 27. Aufl. 2004. Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser, 1987. Print.
- Brueggemann, Walter. *Spirituality of the Psalms*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002. Print.
- Gertz, Jan C. *Grundinformation Altes Testament: Eine Einführung in Literatur, Religion und Geschichte des Alten Testaments*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2006. Print.
- Gunkel, Hermann. *Die Psalmen*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1968. Print.
- Gunkel, Hermann. “Die Psalmen” (1913). *Zur neueren Psalmenforschung*. Ed. Neumann, Peter H. A. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1976. 19–54. Print.
- Holladay, William Lee. *The Psalms through Three Thousand Years: Prayerbook of a Cloud of Witnesses*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993. Print.
- Cf. Fang-Lan Hsieh, Hua Xia Song Yang Hua Wen Zan Mei Zhi yan jiu. Xiang Gang: Jin xin Hui Chu Ban She, 2011.
- Janowski, Bernd. “Das verborgene Angesicht Gottes: Psalm 13 als Muster eines Klagegedichtes des einzelnen.” *Klage. Jahrbuch für biblische Theologie, Band 16*. Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verl, 2001. Print.
- Limburg, James. “Book of Psalms.” *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Ed. David Noel. Freedman. New York: Doubleday, 1992. Print. 522–36.
- Murphy, Roland E. *The Gift of the Psalms*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 2000. Print.

# A Gift from the Lord

Peony O. S. Cheung (2015 MACS Graduate)



From 1999–2009, Peony O. S. Cheung served as a project administrator in the Pastoral Programme, and was responsible for the Thanksgiving Service and fundraising activities (including our annual charity walk, music concerts, etc.). She organized various seminars, including Chuen King Biblical Lectureship, Pommerenke Lecture, and seminars on biblical studies. She also published newsletters, conference books, and evening programme materials. After Peony changed jobs, she has been working as an executive officer in the Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong. After completing her Master of Arts in Christian Studies, she went on to pursue a Master of Divinity at Hong Kong's Lutheran Theological Seminary.

## “My son has autism.”

Peony gave birth to a daughter, and later had a son. As their son grew up, she and her husband found that he was developing differently compared to their elder daughter. Soon after, their son was diagnosed with autism. “Our kid has extremely sensitive senses. He can be easily stimulated by the environment, temperature, sound volume, texture of clothes or taste, etc., and become anxious; his daily habits and fixed routine cannot be changed; If something goes wrong while he's getting dressed, he insists on starting all over again, and he once repeated this process five times, and when he was finally ready, the school bus had already left; even though it meant exposure to the blazing sun, he insisted on waiting for the school bus for 45 minutes and refused to take other transportation.” Peony said with a bitter smile, “I can never change his mind.” One day, the boy forgot to get off the bus because he was counting numbers. When he realized he had missed his stop, the bus had already passed the bus stop where

he usually got off and returned to the terminal. But then he refused to get off the bus and insisted on returning to that bus stop. The driver could do nothing but call the police. “Since we'd reached a deadlock, the police officer asked the driver to send him back to that stop so that he could get off the bus. Four of us and three police officers took the 'shuttle bus' home together. It was a rather 'special' experience.”

## “How does the Lord treat special children such as those with autism?”

After the birth of her son, Peony was puzzled and sad, she also used to complain and cry bitterly. “How does the Lord treat special children such as autistic kids?” With this question in mind, Peony decided to enrol in the Master of Arts in Christian Studies, hoping to find the answer. Having worked at the Divinity School of Chung Chi College for ten years, she was most confident in the knowledgeability of the lecturers. “The university is rich in resources, and there are both Christian students and non-Christian students in this environment, which makes it a microcosm of society. Therefore, our learning is not limited to the framework of the church. Students are from different programmes, some of them are from the Bachelor of Arts, Master of Arts in Christian Studies, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity, Doctor of Divinity or the Doctor of Philosophy program; together, these students will come up with different perspectives on a topic, and such a phenomenon is rare to see in the church.”

Peony took eight subjects during the two-year course. “Prof. Common Chan's classes broadened my horizon in theology; church management practical skills taught by The Rev. LO Lung-kwong and Prof. Lau Chung-ming benefited me a lot; Biblical Theology taught by Prof. Philip Chia's is profound but creative, and the Liturgical Theology was a new field to me...” Peony believes that the courses taught her not only knowledge but also methods and perspectives of thinking. “Everyone has their own framework of beliefs. After I went to the Divinity School of Chung Chi College to study theology, I restructured some parts of my framework and then rebuilt



Group photos were always taken on family members' birthdays.



it. I have greater flexibility and am more willing to listen and accept different opinions." Peony deeply understands that learning should be on one's own initiative. "Studying theology helps me face different situations in the workplace with greater flexibility, and easier to break through the inherent framework, so I can take one more step forward."

After finishing the course at Chung Chi Divinity School, Peony still wanted to learn more. With the encouragement of her husband and Rev. Nicholas Tai, she confirmed

her call and embarked on the road of further study again. In 2021, she completed the Master of Divinity at the Lutheran Theological Seminary. On the long journey of studying theology, Peony was offered a lot of insights. "All things are created by the Lord, so the value of these creations should also be defined by Him. In society, most people will define, label and evaluate special children such as autistic kids from a secular perspective, sometimes even ignoring or underestimating them. That's because most people assess their value from the functional perspective. I neither deliberately beautify these children, nor treat them with pity and sympathy, I just treat them truthfully." After completing two degrees in theology, Peony learnt more about what it means that "God loves what He created by His own hands".

### **"The gift of the Lord is a perfect match!"**

When studying at Divinity School of Chung Chi College, Peony remembered Prof. Milton Wan once said: "The Lord sent your son to your family as you are trustworthy, and He will also grant you other things to match it with it." Peony felt that the Lord has indeed granted her a lot of matches so that she was capable of looking after His gift. "The attending doctor especially loves our son, and this is a comfort to us; our daughter has been so well-behaved since childhood, even though she might at times receive less attention, she always helped us to take care of her younger brother on her own initiative; my mother-in-law has always helped take care of the whole family, so that my husband and I could concentrate on the serving; My workplace also offered me flexible working hours. Don't all these matches and complements come from the Lord just as Prof. Wan said?"

Peony said frankly that her family sometimes feels frustrated and helpless, but God always cheers them up. Therefore, she must pull herself together and play the role of facilitator. "Many times, my husband and I have worried that we are not doing enough, but then the Lord and the angels around us will recognize our efforts. This is the greatest encouragement and comfort."



After completing the Master of Arts in Christian Studies program at our School in 2015, Peony completed the Master of Divinity program at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in 2021.



Peony was grateful that her family always supported her so that she can take care of her studies, work and family.

### **"We have gone through the same thing."**

Peony is a full-time minister serving with the Tsung Tsin Mission, assisting the president in handling different matters; at home, Peony is a mother, shouldering the responsibility of raising her children; in the church, she is the wife of a pastor, taking care of brothers and sisters. With multiple roles and responsibilities, Peony thinks of herself as a business-like person and wants to be "efficient" in everything, but when she is with her son, she can't do things quickly because her son has his own speed. "In my son's schedule, he can probably accomplish only one thing in a day, and our task is to help him accomplish it." From her son Peony learned that people have limitations and are vulnerable from her son; has often reminded herself that her son is the a precious "gift" from the Lord. When the brothers and sisters in the church encounter similar situations in their families, they will consult Peony. "In fact, we are no better than other parents. We are just more experienced and have already walked through the path that you are now walking on." Peony laughed and said, when she and her daughter are out shopping with her son, they are always ready to apologize to passers-by.

### **Postscript:**

The day before this interview, Peony's son was emotionally unstable. His father could do nothing to control his 1.71-meter-tall son but call 999, upon which a police car and an ambulance were dispatched. Three policemen and three paramedics worked together to tie the son onto a stretcher to prevent injuries. Peony, who accompanied and comforted her son in the hospital for a whole night, was interviewed at noon the next day. She was still energetic, calm, and relaxed. "If you are in a broken boat, no matter how confident you are, the boat can't take you to your destination; but the boat I'm in is made by the Lord, and He is also at the helm, He will surely be able to guide me to the shore." With confidence in the Lord, Peony is not afraid of any difficulties, but boldly accepts the gifts and challenges he sends her.

*Written by: Li Kwong-ping  
Translated by: Caitlin Chiu*

## Divinity School of Chung Chi College

# Theology Day Celebration 2021

The 2021 Theology Day Celebration was held on November 6 at the Chung Chi College Chapel and was broadcast via Zoom Webinar. Rev. Dr. LamAM Sung-c Che, our alumnus and outgoing president of the Methodist Church, Hong Kong, delivered a sermon entitled "Theological Education is Connection." More than 200 guests (officiating guests, council members, teaching staff, graduates, new students, choir members, scholarship recipients, staff and helpers) attended the ceremony in person while around 150 participants joined via ZOOM.



## Pastoral Programme: Monday Cheer Up

### "How to Shepherd the Diaspora People of the Hebrew Bible "

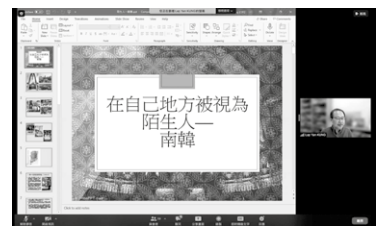
The last two lectures of the "Monday Cheer Up Gatherings" before the summer holiday were given by Dr. Leo Li on "How to Shepherd the Diaspora People of the Hebrew Bible" series, which were held on May 10 and May 24 respectively.

At the end of the lecture, Dr. Li mentioned that some pastors had no idea how to take care of

believers amid the current situation in Hong Kong. He specified that the Lord is preaching through us and responding to the community and the needs of believers. He reminded that the community, in the days of chaos and confusion, should hold on to the faith; hold on to the tradition but also modernize it; connect the Lord's previous work with the crises people are experiencing today; everyone strengthens each other; remember the Lord is the one who gives, and He is not limited by formulas.

### "Aliens in their native land"

From October 11 to December 13, the pastoral programme organized a three-lecture "Monday Cheering



Up Gathering" in the first semester of the academic year 2021–22 via Zoom with an average attendance of around 100 participants. Prof. Kung Lap-yan delivered a series of special talks entitled, "Aliens in Their Native Land." Participants logged in from Hong Kong, Mainland China, Macau, Taiwan, Malaysia, Japan, Australia, UK, Canada and the US.





# Thanksgiving Service of 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Chapel

A thanksgiving service was held on December 4, 2021 to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the chapel. The fund-raising project for the building of the chapel started in 2003 and finally reached the target after nearly two decades. More than 175 guests, alumni, friends, teachers and students attended the service. Meanwhile, around 300 people were joining via YouTube and Facebook.

the participants about the stories during construction process, past fundraising activities and gratitude expressing.

Director Francis C. W. Yip expressed his heartfelt thanks to all the donors, supporters, alumni, friends, teachers and students who participated in the service.

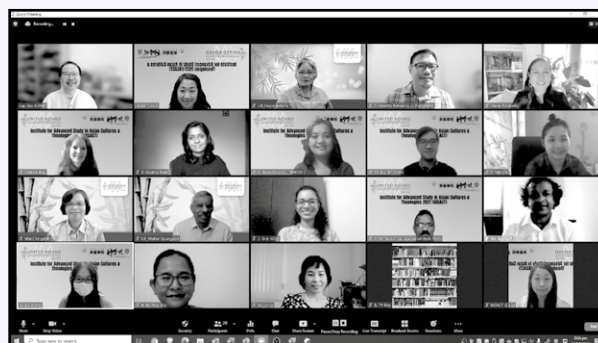
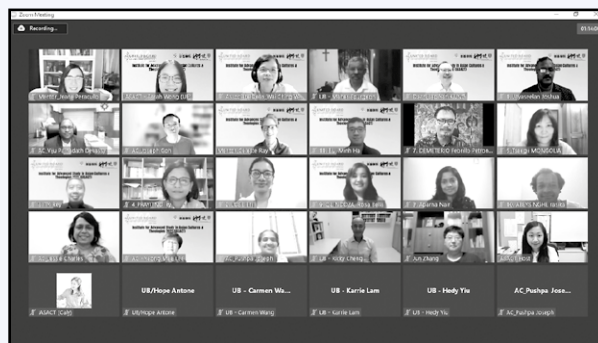
Welcome to watch the recording via the QR code:

Other than the sharing by two guests speakers including Dr. Yung Ying-kit and Mr. Timothy Kwok, Rev. Li Ping-kwong and Rev. Lo Lung-kwong were interviewed by Rev. Wong Ka-fai for the challenges faced during the past years. Two videos were also made to share with



# Institute for Advanced Study in Asian Cultures and Theologies (IASACT):

Funded by the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, the Institute for Advanced Study in Asian Cultures and Theologies (IASACT) has been administered by the Divinity School of Chung Chi College since 2015. This year IASACT focused on the contributions of culture, religion, and environmental education to address the COVID-19 crisis. It welcomed proposals on “The Intertwining of Culture, Religion, and Environmental Education” using action research as well as community-based participatory research. Eleven scholars were chosen from among 52 applicants, while one applicant, a Mongolian scholar, had to withdraw last minute due to a COVID-19 case in her family. The ten participating scholars came from India, Indonesia, Myanmar, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Vietnam. IASACT 2021 was conducted online and was kicked off by an Opening Ceremony on 9 August 9. The programme was completed on 15 December 15 with the final submission of each participant’s research paper. An orientation webinar entitled “Doing Action Research in the Time of COVID-19,” was hosted on the first day of the programme, progress report presentations were given in September, individual meetings with the assigned mentors were scheduled for August and October, and a keynote webinar entitled “Knowledge for Change” was held with Dr. Rajesh Tandon, founding president of Participatory Research in Asia (PRIA), on October 8, 2021. Participating scholars gave their final project presentations on November 5 and 12 before completing the programme in mid-December.

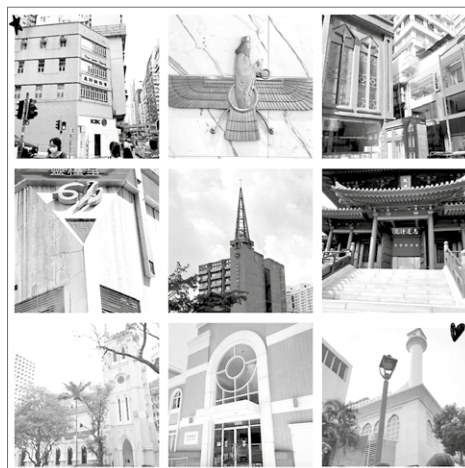


# Local Exchange Programme

Every year, DSCCC organizes a series of summer exchange programmes that allow students to visit theological seminaries in other countries and regions, including Mainland China, Europe, and Southeast Asia, and provide the opportunity to exchange ideas with local seminary teachers and students. In recent years, our teachers and students have travelled to Taiwan, Thailand and Japan: all participating students shared how their experiences greatly benefited their theological training.

Due to the pandemic, overseas exchange programmes were suspended, but this did not stop teachers and students' determination to learn from the local exchanges they participated in. During the summer term 2021, we offered a special course entitled, "Study Tour in Hong Kong: Christianity in the Global City." This two-week course taught by our Associate Director (External Affairs), Prof. Tobias Brandner, led to enthusiastic responses by our students: all slots were filled immediately by students of different denominations and backgrounds. This local exchange programme not only widened students' horizons but also offered them the chance to engage in interreligious dialogue. Prof. Brandner pointed out that the list of places on the itinerary was planned in consultation with the students, who were actively engaged in the course design.

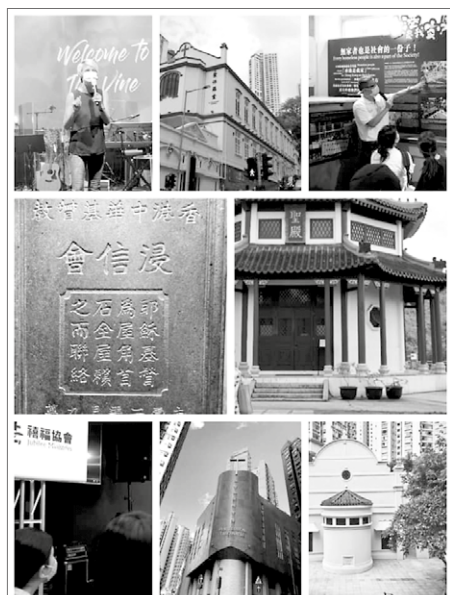
From May 13 to 24, 2021, Professor Brandner and 30 students visited 21 churches, Christian organizations and NGOs across Hong Kong. On May 25, Professor Brandner and his students held a meeting to share reflections and learning outcomes.



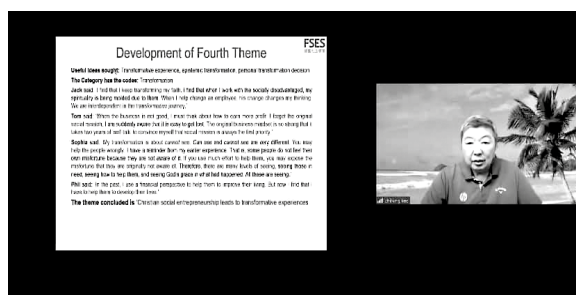
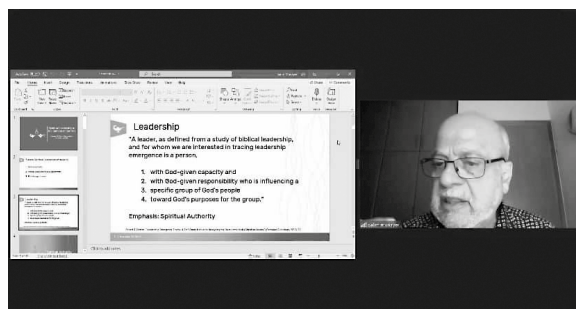
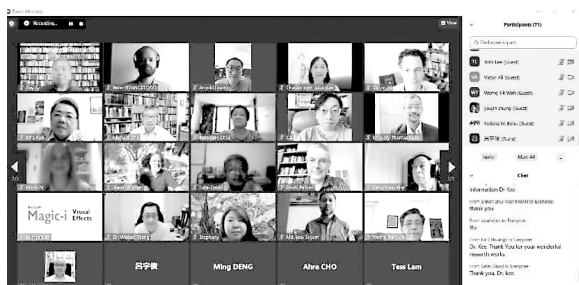
Feedback from the students:

- "It was eye-opening!"
- "As a result of these visits, I saw that we can enter into dialogue with other religions, despite the fact that our beliefs are vastly different."
- "I was deeply impressed by the worship I experienced in a different religious tradition; it reminded me of my church."
- "I opened myself and was drawn in to a new experience during worship."
- "I tried to understand why certain traditions resonated with me more than others."
- "Everyone welcomed us warmly!"
- "This visit gave me a lot to think about, including how I might apply some of the lessons I learned and adapt them in my own church setting."

In the heat of May, Prof. Brandner led the teachers, colleagues and students to visit the following churches, NGOs and other organizations: The Holiness-Pentecostal Wing Kwong Church, St. John's Cathedral, Buddhist Chi Lin Nunnery, True Jesus Church, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, The Kowloon Mosque and Islamic Centre, 611 Bread of Life Church Tsuen Wan, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Zoroastrian Temple, China Congregational Church, Jubilee Ministries, Church of Christ In China, Yau Tong Leung Faat Memorial Church, Hong Kong Christian Industrial Committee, Society for Community Organization, Institute for Sino-Christian Studies and Sino-Christian theology, Ohel Leah Synagogue, Hong Kong Baptist Church, Holy Spirit Seminary College of Theology and Philosophy, Orthodox Metropolitanate of Hong Kong and Southeast Asia, The Vine Church and Praise Assembly.



# News from Asia Academy of Practical Theology (Hong Kong) International Conference on ZOOM



On May 22, 2021, an international conference was held on ZOOM, hosted by the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies—CUHK, and coordinated by the Asia Academy of Practical Theology—Hong Kong and our School. With nearly 80 in attendance, the conference met with enthusiastic response as more than 30 papers from all over the world were received. An opening ceremony was officiated, and welcome speeches were made by Prof. Pan Lai-kwan, Head of

the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, Prof. Simon Kwan, Chairperson of the Asia Academy of Practical Theology, and Prof. Francis Yip, Director of our School. The theme of the conference was “Spiritual Leadership & Social Transformation”, Dr. Kee Chihing, Chair of the Fullness Social Enterprises Society, and Dr. Salim Munayer, executive director of Musalaha Reconciliation Ministry in Israel-Palestine, were invited as principal speakers.

## “Practical Theology: Theology-in-Action”

The online course “Practical Theology: Theology in Action” was co-organized by the Asia Academy of Practical Theology—Hong Kong and our School in August 2021. It included four lectures in total, deconstructed Practical Theology by four themes. On August 5, the Head of the Department of Cultural and Religious Studies and Associate Director of our School, Prof. Simon Kwan, gave a lecture entitled “Is Theology a Loftier-than-the-sky Theory, or a Down-to-earth Practice,”

and Dr. Sarah Shea gave a lecture on another topic, “The Healer for Chaos in the Church: Practical Theology.” On August 12, Rev. Dr. Luk Kim Hung gave a lecture entitled “How Prayer Heals?” On August 19, Dr. Sarah Shea gave another lecture entitled “Churches Need SEN Friends, SEN friends don’t need Churches”; on August 26, Dr. Elaine Yip gave a lecture entitled “Empowering Women’s Role in the Church.” The lectures were conducted via Zoom and were free of charge.

## 2021 MACS Retreat Day

On June 12, 2021, at the end of the semester, DSCCC held a retreat day for students of the Master of Arts in Christian Studies (MACS) programme at the Church of St John the Baptist.

Halfway through the retreat, students paused to reflect on their relationship with God. Students were accompanied by our associate chaplain Ms. Vicky Shiu and chaplain assistant Ms. Susan Ip.

Retreat activities included labyrinth meditation, deep body relaxation, icon meditation, etc. Together, students practised mindfulness, tasted scented tea and raisins, and participated in group sharing.



## Sexual Harassment Prevention Workshop

On May 27, 2021, DSCCC held a Sexual Harassment Prevention Workshop. The assistant executive secretary of Hong Kong Christian Council, Ms. Jessica Tso ('13 MACS), was the speaker.

The workshop was geared toward students who plan to do their internships in the coming semesters; other interested students also participated. A total of 21 students attended.



## The Christian Study Centre on Chinese Religion and Culture (CSCCRC) and the Society for the Study of History of Christianity in China (SSHCC)

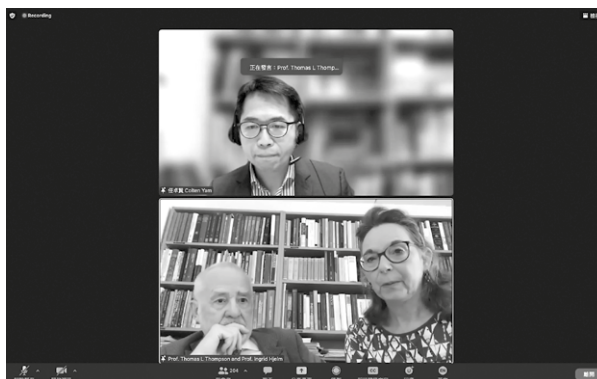
The 12th International Symposium on the History of Christianity in Modern China was held via Zoom from August 12–13 and August 19–20 2021. Prof. Ying Fuk Tsang was invited to deliver the keynote speech on the topic, “Cultural Revolution and Christianity in China.” Special tributes were given in honor of two distinguished scholars in the field: Prof. Jean-Paul Wiest (former Research Director of the Beijing Center for Chinese Studies) and Prof. Leung Ka-lun (Honorary President/William C. Newbern Professor of Alliance Bible Seminary).

Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang gave a special course entitled, “Jesus Rode to China on a Cannonball: Rethinking the History of Christianity in Modern China.” The online course was co-organised by CSCCRC and the Centre for Christian Studies and convened every Wednesday night from November 17 to December 15, 2021.

## Church Visits

On October 31, 2021, our students and teachers visited the following churches in Hong Kong: Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong Ma On Shan Church, the Church of Christ in China Tsing Yi Chuen Yuen Church, and Ka Fook Pentecostal Holiness Church.

# The 25th Chuen King Lecture: From Biblical Origin Stories to the Tall Tales of the Prophets



Director Francis Yip delivered his welcoming speech, noting the celebrations both of the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chung Chi College and of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of DSCCC's chapel. Prof. Yip encouraged participants to freely discuss their views regarding the question of the historicity of biblical narrative. The Copenhagen School represents a perspective that theologians in the past have considered controversial.

This year's lectures ran under the following titles, Lecture 1: "Reiterative Rhetoric, Royal Ideology and the Historicity of Samuel- Kings"; and Lecture 2: "Prophets and Their Tall Tales: Miracle Stories in the Bible." Prof. Ingrid Hjelm and Prof. Sonia Wong delivered their responses to Prof. Thompson after the lectures.





# 2022 Walkathon



The 2022 Walkathon was held on March 13, 2022 amid Hong Kong's the fifth wave of Covid-19. With the tremendous support of our alumni and friends, more than 1.68 million Hong Kong Dollars was raised through the various fundraising activities of our students, who also enlisted the support of their teachers. 112 participants accepted different kinds of challenges with a total number of 714 sponsors.



On the evening of March 13, a live show was broadcast via YouTube in lieu of the traditional fund-raising walkathon held during the day. The fund-raising committee formed by our students had pre-recorded and edited a series of videos introducing audiences to the different fundraising projects, such as calligraphy writing, 24–7 walking tours around Hong Kong's churches and seminaries, cycling events etc. A gameshow-style quiz was designed by the students for six of the teachers: Prof. Kung Lap-yan, Prof. Naomi Thurston, Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang, Prof. Simon Kwan, Prof. Colten Yam and Prof. Sonia Wong showed their competitive side, and the audience was in stitches. Prof. Thurston and Prof. Wong sang a popular Cantonese song while Prof. Francis Yip and Dr. Leo Li wowed viewers with their re-written rendition of a 1990s Cantonese hit song. In their version, Professors Yip and Li lamented the challenges of online teaching with hilarious mock sob stories, winning them raucous applause from the audience.



difficulties, DSCCC successfully raised 6 million dollars since 2019 for our theological education fund. Prof. Yip also acknowledged the wonderful creativity shown by our alumni, students, staff and supporters who once again came up with innovative, fun and inspiring ideas to raise funds.



Director Francis Yip thanked all participants, supporters and friends of the school for their generous donations amid the challenges of the ongoing global pandemic. Despite

# PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

## Director's News

### Prof. Francis C. W. Yip

Prof. Francis Yip joined the United Board Fellows Program, a leadership training program organized by the United Board. He attended an online summer institute co-organized by the Singapore Management University from July 19 to 30, 2021. With the donation to UB by an alumnus of Chung Chi College, Mr. Albert Hung, he carried the title "United Board Chung Chi College Alumni Fellow."

He was invited to attend the HKCCCC Annual General Meeting cum Thanksgiving Service and Inaugural Ceremony for the New General Secretary, Rev. Wong Ka-fai on October 23, 2021 in Cheung Lo Church (Church of Christ in China).

He was invited to deliver a sermon on September 26, 2021 for the ordination service of the Methodist Church, Hong Kong.

On May 22, 2021, Prof. Francis Yip was invited to deliver welcome speech for an International Zoom Conference: "Spiritual Leadership & Social Transformation" co-organized by Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, Asia Academy of Practical Theology—Hong Kong and our school.

### Prof. Tobias Brandner

Prof. Brandner was invited to be the moderator and respondent at a conference on "Divinization (theosis) in the Eastern Christianity" organized by the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies on October 15, 2021.

He presented a paper entitled "Resilience on the Road: The spread of religious beliefs along China's Belt and Road Network" at the Annual Conference of the European Association of the Study of Religion (EASR) in Pisa, Italy (via Zoom).

### Prof. Sonia Wong

Prof. Sonia Wong's research project entitled, "The Political Unconscious of the Deuteronomistic (Hi)story" was successfully funded by the Early Career Scheme 2021–22 from the Research Grants Committee.

She accepted an invitation to be one of the seven panelists from different parts of the world on a webinar "Globalizing Biblical Studies in the 21st Century" organized by the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL). The webinar was pre-recorded on June 3, 2021 and released to the public on August 2, 2021 at SBL's website (<https://www.sbl-site.org/membership/webinars.aspx>).

She accepted an invitation by the SCM Old Ghost Fellowship to lead a series of six Bible studies on the topic of "Psychological Biblical Criticism" from July–December, 2021.

She accepted an invitation to be one of six commentators of the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia Doctoral Colloquium (virtual meeting; August 3, 2021).

She accepted an invitation to give one of the main lectures at the European Congress of Theology Meeting (Zurich, September 5 to 8, 2021). Her lecture "Signifying the Empire against the Empire or Doing Historical Criticism with Postcolonial Theories" was delivered on September 7, 2021. Video recording of the lecture may be accessed through the Congress' website (<https://www.theologiekongress.uzh.ch/de/Programm.html>).

From October 1 to 2, 2021, Prof. Wong attended the academic conference "Acting Out Theology of Democracy in Global Context: Bible, Theology, Solidarity" organized by Yonsei University in Korea and moderated the first round of the conference on the second day.

### Prof. Christina Wong

Prof. Christian Wong's research project entitled, "Radical Social Movements and Networked Ecumenism: An Analysis of Three Christian NGOs in Colonial Hong Kong, 1960s–1990s" was successfully funded by the Early Career Scheme 2021–22 from the Research Grants Committee (RGC). She was invited to attend the RGC Award Presentation Ceremony of 2021/22 held on 11 November 2021 in recognition of her outstanding proposal among Early Career Scheme awardees in 2021–22.

### **Prof. Colten Yam**

Prof. Yam's research project entitled, "Contextualizing De spiritu et littera: Analysis, Commentary and Latin-Chinese Bilingual Edition" was successfully funded by the Early Career Scheme 2021–22 from the Research Grants Committee.

He received the Teaching Development and Language Enhancement Grant 2021–22, CUHK for the project titled "Developing Pronunciation and Mnemonic Techniques in Ancient Greek Learning".

He presented a paper entitled "Basil of Caesarea's Understanding of Evil and Suffering" at the online-conference of "Koinonia of Chinese Christian Theologians" with the theme of "Suffering and Hope" on July 10, 2021.

He accepted an invitation to be a commentator at the Association for Theological Education in South East Asia Doctoral Colloquium (virtual meeting, August 2–3, 2021).

### **Prof. Kung Lap-yan**

Prof. Kung was elected among associate professors to serve on the Faculty Board of the Faculty of Arts with effect from August 1, 2021 to July 31, 2022.

### **Prof. Naomi Thurston**

Prof. Thurston has been organizing an online research discussion group of scholars in Chinese Christianity that meets every 5–6 weeks to exchange and discuss research ideas and different projects. Participants from the US, Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan have joined these meetings and presented their research on Chinese theologians, church history, and contemporary Chinese Christian thinkers, most recently on Wu Yaozong and He Guanghu.

From May 31 to June 2, 2022, she participated in the Chinese Theologies Conference III: Academic and Diasporic Theologies hosted by the Council on East Asian Studies at Yale University, at which she presented a paper.

On April 20, she gave a brief talk on the Book of Job for the April 2022 Bible study course organized by The Methodist Church, Hong Kong. On April 12, 2022, she moderated a talk in the ISCS Guest Lecture Series hosting Prof. Werner Jeanrond of the University of Oslo, who spoke on "How Faith Works," and gave a short response.

On the invitation of the Institute of Sino-Christian Studies, Hong Kong, Prof. Thurston gave a lecture at Helsinki University on February 28, 2022 entitled, "Sino-Christian Encounters & the Christian Critique of Culture." This lecture was given in the context of a course on World Christianity given by Minna Hietamaki.

On November 3, 2021, she presented the paper entitled "Relating to the Whole Community in [West African] Akan and East Asian Ancestral Traditions," an online conference on "African Relationality and the Problem of Evil," sponsored by the John Templeton Foundation and the Global Philosophy of Religion Project at the University of Birmingham.

On March 26, 2021, Prof. Thurston presented paper entitled "Theology and the Chinese Humanities — Jürgen Moltmann in Chinese" at a conference held online by the China Christianity Studies Group, CCSG.

### **Prof. Ying Fuk-tsang**

On January 10, Prof. Ying was invited by the Evangelical Free Church of Australia and delivered a special talk online.

He was invited to share at Alliance Bible Seminary's "China Week," held virtually from 2–3 February.

On February 26, he attended a sharing session held online by Kyobunkwan (日本教文館) in Japan.

On June 12, 2021, he was invited to present a paper entitled "Continuity and Discontinuity: Perspectives on the Religio-Political Relationships of Hong Kong" at the conference "Transforming Version and Memory: Hong Kong and Hong Kong Studies Since 2019" held by the International Centre for Taiwan & Hong Kong Studies, National Sun Yat-sen University.

From July 14 to 15, 2021, he attended the 7th Wesleyan Theology Seminar of World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches (WFCMC) organized by the World Federation of Chinese Methodist Churches and presented a paper entitled "The Mission Ideas and Practices of William E. Soothill as Revealed in A Mission in China."

On July 31, he was invited to be the keynote speaker at the "Theology Salon 2021" held by the Graduate School of Religion in Chung Yuan Christian University. The series' title was "Church Collaboration and Resistance Under Revolutionary China, 1949–1958."

He was invited to share in an online seminar entitled "At the Crossroads of Modernization: Is Christianity Crucial to Modernity," organized by Taiwan Gu sa Press on August 5, 2021.

He was invited to be the keynote speaker at the 12th International Symposium on the History of Christianity in Modern China, which was co-organised by the Modern History Research Centre, Department of History, HKBU, and Christianity and Chinese Culture Research Centre, Alliance Bible Seminary on August 21, 2021. He presented a keynote speech on "Cultural Revolution and Christianity in China".

He was invited by the Hong Kong Lutheran Federation to share on "Death Still Alive: The Story of the Lutheran Missionaries Behind the Tombstone" on September 14, 2021.

### **Prof. Alex H. H. IP**

Prof. Ip attended the online Bible conference on January 4, 2022.

On January 4, he also taught on the Book of Philippians in the staff meeting of Breakthrough Company. On the same day, he attended a Bible study group in the camp held by the fellowship of Baptist University.

He went to the U.K. and visited Keble College as Senior Research Visitor until May 2022.

## **Office News**

Rev. Wong Ka-fai resigned from his position as Director of the Pastoral Programme, Divinity School of Chung Chi College, effective from September 1, 2021 to take up the post of the General Secretary of the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China (HKCCCC). He will stay on as the Honorary Director of the Pastoral Programme until July 31, 2022.

Rev. Yiu Chi-ho joined the School as chaplain and Associate Director of the Pastoral Programme starting from February 14, 2022.

Mr. Cheung Yiu-cheung's appointment ended on July 2021. He has served the Divinity School of Chung Chi College as Workman II since June 2001. Ms. Kwok Kin-hung became his successor for the post in August 2021.

Ms. Ma Siu-ling completed her contract and left the School on September 15, 2021. Miss Zero Cheung took up the post of Programme Co-ordinator (KAIROS Academy for Theology and Life Formation) August 2021.

## **Obituaries**

### **Rev. Dr. Daniel Chow**

Rev. Daniel Chow passed away on February 26, 2022, in Boston in the United States, at the age of 96. Rev. Chow was a biblical scholar who specialized in New Testament studies. From 1976 to 1992, he taught in the Theology Division, which was later renamed the Divinity School of Chung Chi College; he was the Head of the Division from 1988–1992, and the Acting Chaplain of Chung Chi College from 1990–1992. He was also the Deputy District Pastor (1982–1984) and District Pastor (Chief Pastor) (1984–1998) of Tsung Tsin Mission of Hong Kong and Head of the Tsung Tsin Lok Yuk Seminary. Rev. Chow was a much-beloved teacher, pastor, and leader in the community. Our School has mourned his passing, and we pray that God will comfort his family.

### **Prof. David Suh**

Prof. David Suh passed away in February 2022, at the age of 92. He was born in North Korea in 1931 and escaped with his family to South Korea during the Korean War (1950–1953). He studied philosophy at the University of the Rockies and Illinois State University and graduated from Union Theological Seminary in the USA. He was the vice president of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia and was sent to the Hong Kong office at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Prof. Suh taught at Ewha Womans University, a Christian university, in South Korea from 1964 to 1996, where he became Professor Emeritus of Theology. He was invited to be Visiting Professor at our School in 2012. "Hong Kong students are friendly, open-minded and talkative. I am deeply inspired every time I join the Thursday Service," he once said, expressing his appreciation for our students.

### **Mr. Cheng Yo-hang**

Yo-hang, son of Dr. Roger H. M. Cheng ('11 MATS, '18 BD) and Ms. Janet W. C. Chik ('11 MACS, '14 BD), passed away on December 7, 2021 in Tainan, at the age of 23. The funeral and memorial services were held on December 17, 2021, and December 28, 2021, respectively, both convened by the Chaplaincy Office of Chang Jung Christian University. Yo-hang, who was born and grew up in Hong Kong and was baptized at the Hong Kong Methodist Church, had moved to Tainan with his parents in October 2020 to study at Chang Jung Christian University.